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STRUGGLES FOR LIFE IN THE METROPOLIS.

In a metropolis swarming with nearly two millions of inhabitants, and with its society organised on the highest artificial system, the struggle for existence is often most intense, and productive of expedients to earn the means of subsistence which would never be thought of elsewhere. At all times there may be said to be a large floating population with no regular employment, and whose wits are ever at work to earn a penny. Besides all other causes of impoverishment, many tradesmen are thrown out of employment by new inventions and discoveries; and many more are next to destitute from an error in the choice of a profession, and their inability to attain proficiency in their craft. These last, after numberless attempts and defeats, and many and bitter mortifications, give up the matter in despair, and go to swell the ranks of the unemployable and supernumerary class. What becomes of all these, and how their wants are supplied, is a mystery not easily fathomable. 'Ten men,' says a German proverb, 'cannot tell you how the eleventh lives.' The following brief sketches may contribute in some degree to clear up a portion of the mystery.

The Duck-weed Hawker.—Walking one day by the river side, in the neighbourhood of Battersea, sketch-book in hand, and meditating a design upon the Red House, I was attracted by a picturesque-looking figure, busily engaged in raking the surface of a stagnant pool. By his side, on the bank, stood an old wine-hammer, reeking with muddy ooze. Feeling curious to ascertain what was going forward, I approached the operator, and civilly questioned him as to his proceeding. The following dialogue may give the reader an idea of a branch of industry which I confess was unknown to me till then.

'My good fellow, if I may be so bold, what is it you are doing?'

'Oh, bless your honour! no harm. I only vants the duck-weed you see, sir; and they never sets no wally on it, so I gits it for nuffin.'

'But of what use is that green scum, or duck-weed, as you call it?'

'Did yer honour never keep no ducks?' (I was compelled to confess my inexperience.) 'Vy, then, I'll tell yer honour. Yer see this ere as grows on the top of the vater is duck-weed, and in course the ducks is fond on it; and them as keeps ducks is glad to git it, in course, at a low figure. So ye see, as I gits it for nuffin but my trouble, I can afford to sell it cheap.'

'You don't pretend to say that people buy it?'

'Don't I though? Ketch me givin on it away! I gits a penny a misure for every morsel on it; and voth the money, and no mistake.'

'And where do you find customers?'

'Vy, that's the vurst on it too. 'Taint much of a nosegay to carry about a feller; still I don't travel no great vays—hadn't need, you s'pose. Vell, then, sir, as you don't calkilate no hoppelosition, an' p'raps you'll stan' the price of a half-pint, I don't mind tellin' ye. My valk is Tuttle Street, the Hambury, and Strutton-ground, and Brewers Green, and Palmer's Willage, and York Street, vere there's lots o' courts and alleys, and ducks in course.'

'Keep ducks there! Why, those are the filthiest neighbourhoods in Westminster.'

'That's the werry reason, sir: there is so much mud, they vants the ducks to gobble it up. He—he!'

'But where do they find room for them? There are neither yards nor ponds.'

'Oh, there's the street door front by day, and they doos werry vell under the bed o' nights. But I'm werry dry a' talkin', yer honour; and I musn't vaste no time, for yer see this ere sort o' green stuff vont keep not nohow, and must all be sold to-night.'

'Dry! why, you are dripping wet from head to foot.'

'Nothin' but vater, sir; and vater never vets Jakes, cos, d'ye see, I perfers beer.'

'Is your name Jakes?'

'No, sir, my name's Villums—Ned Villums. But they calls me Jakes cos I scums the mud-pools and ditches. But them as calls names pays their pennies; so I takes their tin and their compliments together, and never minds. Yer honour's a goin' to stan' summat, I know?'

Having complied with the poor fellow's demand, and helped him, as I best could, to shoulder his nauseous burden, I saw him trudge off beneath it, at a good five-mile-an-hour pace, to the sale of his moist merchandise. As he vanished with his dripping load, I could not help mentally comparing the present contents of the wine-basket to those of a past day—the sparkling juice of the grape to the reeking weed—and the different destinies of those who revelled round the bottles, and his who catered for the ducks. But the fellow was not to be pitied, and I felt that compassion would have been in his case injustice. He had health, humour, and spirits, which a wine-bibbing dyspeptic might have envied; and if his philosophy was not as elevated as that of Wordsworth's 'leech-gatherer on the lonely moor,' it was, to say the least of it, as practical.

Green food for Singing-Birds.—This is another article of perambulating merchandise peculiar to the great city, and one which meets with a regular and ready market during the greater part of the year. Chick-weed, groundsel, seed-grasses, and round green turfs, form the staple of the merchant's wares, with which he threads the streets and suburbs during the middle portion of the day; his cry being seldom heard before ten or eleven in the morning, and ceasing ere sundown,

when his customers and consumers go to roost. One of these verdant professionals passes my window thrice a week during the summer months, and I have frequently encountered him in occasional strolls for the last ten years. Tall and erect, brawny and broad-shouldered, and bronzed with the suns of sixty summers, he looks more like a trooper of the Guards than a retailer of chickweed. But he evidently delights in his way of life, which leads him to the green fields ere the lark is yet aloft; and as he plods his dilatory way along the public thoroughfares, he sings his loud and sonorous song to a self-taught tune. 'Groundsel and chickweed for the pretty little singing-bird,' is the song; and the tune, commencing by a chant of four words on C, the first note, runs down the scale, like the simple chime of village bells, to the octave below, upon which he dwells with a force and gusto that is quite catching, ere he resumes his everlasting Da Capo.

One day, while choosing a turf from his basket, to gratify an impudent pet bird, I questioned my tall salesman as to his inducement for following such a mode of life. 'Well, sir,' said he, 'I don't mind telling you, as you are a regular customer. The fact is, I couldn't do nothing else at the time I begun it, and wasn't fit neither for regular work. You must know, sir, I was bred a farm-labourer, and might have done well enough, for I was always fond of field-work, and cattle-tending, and such-like. But then, d'ye see, in eighteen-seven I listed—all along of a purty girl as didn't know her own mind—and main sad and sorry we both of us were when we found I couldn't be got off from serving. But that's neither here nor there. We parted, and in less than four years I went to Spain, where I had enough of sodgering. I've a stoo'd, sir, up to my breast in growing corn, and seen the ears on't cut off wi' bullets as clean as a whistle. But that's no matter. I got a bad wound at Vittoria, which was the hardest day's work I ever see in my life. So I were sent home wi' a hartificial brain-pan, and eightpence a-day. I couldn't very well live upon that, you know, sir; so I comes up from Chatham (you know, sir, we're all sent to Chatham, up to Pitt's there, when we come from foreign parts), up to town here, to look about me. Well, sir, I couldn't get nothing as suited me, nor as didn't suit me either, for the matter o' that; and then my head did swim badly at times, though that's all right now, thank God! So, sir, I was a-standing one morning in one of them little streets by St Paul's when a gen'l'man comes out of a countin'-house wi' green shutters, and a pen in his ear, and he says to me, "My good fellow," says he, "haven't you got nothing to do? I want a man," says he, "as got nothing to do." "No, sir," says I, "I han't; and I should be very much obliged to you for a job." "Then," says he, "do you see that lark in the cage, and do you know what he wants?" "I see him plain enough, sir," says I; "and it strikes me he wants to get out." "No, he don't," says he; "he's not such a fool. He wants a fresh turf; and if you'll go and cut him one, I'll give you sixpence." "That's a bargain," said I, and away I went; but I found it a long way to the green grass, and that sixpence was arned harder than some. But I cut half-a-score turfs while I was about it, thinking there might be more birds than one with a country taste. Well, the gen'l'man gave me a shilling when he knowed how far I had been, and I sold all the tothers for a penny a-piece. Arter that I took up with the weeds and grasses, and got a regular walk (one of my customers, as thinks his self very witty, calls it Birdcage Walk); and many's the bird in this

here town as knows my song as well as his own. That was my beginnin', sir, and I've kep the game alive ever since; 'cept in winter-time, when I sells snow and ice to the 'fectioners, and brandy-balls, and sich-like, to warm the stomach on skating-days. And let me tell you, sir, I likes feeding the little birds, and being my own master, better than shooting and sticking my fellow-creeturs at another man's bidding; and between you and me and the post it pays better.'

With this the quondam grenadier departed, and in less than a minute I heard the well-known cry, 'Groundsel and chickweed for the pretty little singing-bird!'

The Mushroom-Hunter.—Pursuing an avocation which renders me occasionally liable to be abroad at all hours of the night, the opportunity is forced upon me of observing the various phases of London life which each succeeding hour reveals. Following the example of the Vicar of Wakefield, I never refuse the challenge of any man, whatever his apparent station, who proffers his conversation; and I have often found the gossip of a wayfarer both interesting and profitable, while I am not aware that I ever lost anything by giving them a hearing. Business-belated one September night, or rather morning, for midnight had long ceased tolling from the thousand churches of the city, I was seeking for a short cut homewards, and stood for a moment hesitating at a hitherto unexplored turning out of Gray's Inn Lane, when I was accosted by a man of strangely uncouth appearance, who inquired if I had lost my way. Upon stating that I merely wanted the shortest cut towards Holloway, he said he was going the whole distance, and beyond, and should be happy to show me the nearest road; adding, that he supposed I was desirous of getting to bed, 'which I,' said he, 'have just left, to begin my day's work.' 'A strange hour,' thought I, 'to begin a day's work; not yet one o'clock.' And as I walked behind him through the narrow and dirty lanes of that neighbourhood, I availed myself of the accommodation afforded by the gas-lamps to scrutinise his figure and costume. Of a slim and wiry make, and of the middle size, and about thirty-five years of age, I saw from his motions that he was active, agile, and a stranger to fatigue. His whole dress fitted his muscular frame almost as closely as that of Harlequin himself, but was composed of the vilest materials; half-leather, half-cloth, greasy, and rent, and patched and re-patched in a hundred places. A short pair of hobnailed Bluchers encased his feet; and a skull-cap of leather, guiltless of the smallest indication of a brim, covered his head, fastening under his chin by a strap. At his back hung a long, shallow, wicker-basket, with a canvas covering: this was strapped round his waist. He was accompanied by a small, black, and ugly half-breed terrier—an old hand, evidently, for he lost no ground, but kept uniformly before his master, and if he outran him, never returned upon his track, but waited quietly till he came up.

'That is a prudent dog of yours,' I said, as we emerged into a wider thoroughfare, and walked side by side.

'Ay, sir; he has learned prudence in the same school as his master. He was wild enough in his young days like myself; and, like me, he has found out that if he would be of any use to-morrow, he must take care of himself to-day.'

'You said you were just beginning your day's work; may I ask what is your occupation?'

'Occupation, properly speaking, I have none, sir—worse luck! I am one of a good many, driven from a

thriving trade by modern machinery and improvements. You must know, sir, I was brought up to my father's trade, that of a calenderer; and a very decent property the old man left when he died. Four thousand pounds there was in the three per cents., which I, like a fool, prevailed upon my poor old mother to throw into the business, for the sake of extending it, thinking I could make five-and-twenty per cent. of it instead of three; and so I might too, but for new inventions, which threw me out of the market, and brought us in the end to ruin. I sometimes thank God the old lady didn't live to see the upshot of it all. We passed her grave, sir, two minutes ago, in the Spa-Fields' burying-ground. Well, sir, when it was all over, I paid a good dividend; and the creditors, seeing how the matter was, gave me a couple of hundreds to begin again with. So, being always fond of books, and having a fancy for the trade, I thought I might do well enough—having only myself to look after—in a bookseller's shop; so I took a neat house in the New Road, and laid out all my money in books, and sat myself down behind the counter to wait for customers. Perhaps you would not think it, but there I sat from Monday morning till Saturday night without seeing a soul enter the shop except one child, who wanted change for a sixpence; and yet five or six thousand people passed the open door every day. The second week was not much better; few people came, and those who did come, wanted the books for less than they cost, and assured me—which I afterwards found was true enough—that they could get them for less elsewhere. The business never came to anything, as you may suppose. In the course of six months I found out, what I ought to have known at first, that I didn't understand it; so I closed with a man who offered to take the stock at a valuation, and relieve me of the house. A rare valuation it was! All the volumes were lumped together at sixpence a-piece; and I saw the major part of them a week afterwards bundled into a great box at the door, and ticketed "Ninence each." I received something less than a fourth of the original cost of the whole, and walked out, not particularly well satisfied, to try again.

'I was afraid to venture upon any other business, and therefore looked out for a situation of some sort. If I could have written a decent hand, I might perhaps have got a berth as under-clerk; but nobody could ever read my writing; and though I threw away five or six pounds to an advertising teacher, who sports a colossal fist and goose-quill on his signboard, all my endeavours to mend it were of no use. I need not trouble you with the fifty attempts I made to gain an honest livelihood, further than to say that they were all for a long time failures. My money went by degrees. As I grew older I grew poorer, and went down of course in the social scale. I have been warden in a jail, whence I was turned out because a highwayman, whom I had compelled to good behaviour, swore I was an old associate; I have been a pedlar, and robbed of my pack on Durdham Down; I have been a billiard-marker, and kicked out by the proprietor because I would not score more games than the players had played; I have been cabman and hackney-coachman, till the omnibuses cut the cabs' throats; I have kept a fruit-stall on the pavement edge till it wouldn't keep me; I have hawked about the street every possible commodity you could mention; I have driven cattle to Smithfield, and thence to the slaughter-house; I have sold cats'-meat and dogs'-meat, and dealt in bones and rags; in short, I have done everything but beg, and have lived a whole week upon sixpence, because I would not do that.'

'I hope things are not so bad with you just now?' said I, desirous of hearing the conclusion of his history.

'Not quite, sir: there is truth in the old proverb, "He that is sad can fall no lower." At first I suffered a deal of mortification from the neglect of friends of prosperous days, who were very liberal of their compassion and condolence, which are things I hate, but chary of everything else. I believe I conferred an

obligation upon them all, when I resolved, as I soon did, never to trouble them again.

'One fine morning, after walking the streets all night for want of a bed, I found myself in Covent Garden market at sunrise, among a shoal of carts and wagons loaded with vegetables for the day's sale. The thought struck me at once that here I might pick up a job; I commenced the look-out in good earnest, and wasn't long of getting employment. I received threepence for pitching a couple of tons of cabbages out of a wagon, and scoring them off; but then I was only a deputy, and was paid half-price. This, however, procured me a breakfast, and gave me heart to try again. I picked up three shillings altogether in the course of the day, two of which I paid in advance for a regular lodging for the following week—a luxury I had not then enjoyed for some months. The next day was not a market-day, and I did not manage so well; but I stuck by the market, and learned many modes of earning a penny. I bought vegetables at a low price, or got them in return for my labour; these I sold again, and managed to earn something, at all events, every day. Once, on taking potatoes to a baker who purchased all I could get, I was asked for mushrooms, for which the old chap had a mighty relish. I promised to get him some, but found them too dear in the market to allow any margin for me; so recollecting that I had seen a vast number the year before in a certain part of the Barnet Road, during my experience as assistant drover, I set off on an exploring expedition. Having arrived at the spot, after a pretty close search, I succeeded in gathering a tidy crop, though not without a good deal of labour and inconvenience. I found that the sale of these paid me well for my trouble. I often make between three and four shillings by a trip, and sometimes more. But I soon found out that others reaped that ground as well as myself; and to keep it pretty well in my own hands, I find it necessary to be on the spot before the sun is up. By this means I get more; and what is of greater importance, they are of better quality.'

'And pray, does your dog perform any part in the business, or is he merely a companion?'

'Why, sir, I daresay dogs might be taught to hunt mushrooms as well as truffles; but there is no occasion for that, as mushrooms grow above ground, and can't well be missed. But my dog's part is to mind the basket, and he does the business well. You see I leave the harvest to his care, while I scramble through hedges and over ditches and fences in search of more. I saw you quizzing my surtout; 'tisn't much to look at, but it serves my purpose better than a coat with two tails. I can ram my head, in this thick shoe-leather cap, through a quickset-hedge, where a fox would hardly follow me; and when I have got this small bag full (producing a canvas bag from his pocket), I return and deposit them in the basket till the work is done. I am back again in the market by the time the housekeepers are abroad purchasing provisions for the day. My stock never hangs long on hand; and it is very seldom that I am reduced to the necessity of lowering my price, or consuming them myself.'

'This is a laborious calling,' I said, 'and one that cannot be very remunerative, or allow you to make much provision for the future.'

'Not much, sir, it is true; but yet I do make some. I save a shilling every week at least, and sometimes, in a lucky season, as much as five: that goes into the savings'-bank, and would suffice to keep me out of the hospital in case of illness, which I don't much fear, being a teetotaler, and pretty well weather-proof. I think it was Dr Johnson, but I won't be certain, who said, "No man ever begins to save unless he has a prospect of accumulation." I don't think that is altogether true; at anyrate if it is, I am the exception that proves the rule. I began to save, strange as it may sound, because I did not know what to do with my money. Having learned by necessity to live upon the smallest possible amount, I was afraid, when my gains

exceeded that, of again acquiring luxurious habits, which it had cost me so much to get rid of; for that reason I put the first five shillings into the bank, and have added to it weekly, with very few omissions, ever since. I will not deny that, with the gradual increase of my little hoard, a new prospect has opened for me, and that I only wait for the possession of a certain amount to begin business in the market upon a more respectable footing, which will allow me to dispense with my midnight labours.*

Here he ceased; and soon after arriving at the corner of the street in which was my own home, I bade him good-morning; and wishing a speedy and prosperous result to his economic endeavours, parted with the mushroom-hunter.

HISTORY OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND.*

A work with this title has come under our notice, which is full both of amusement and instruction—amusement even of a romantic character, and instruction of that kind which operates upon the mind rather by suggestive facts than dry reflection. We propose running through the volumes in such a way as to collect some general and popular idea of the history of the great institution referred to; and we shall thus be able to afford a better notion of the varied contents of the work than we could hope to give by means of the scanty extracts to which our space would limit us.

During the Civil War, when our merchants were unwilling to be robbed for the good of the state, they were in the habit of keeping their treasure in their own houses under lock and key. But their servants and apprentices were sometimes of a more patriotic character. Nothing would satisfy them but a share of the blows that were going; and in order to be able to serve their country, they made no scruple of carrying off the money intrusted to their guardianship. In such cases it usually happened that they were never more heard of. This made the merchants who had still anything to lose, and the servants who were honest, and still trusted, very uneasy under such a charge; and it became the custom, for the sake of security, to lend whatever money was not in use to the wealthy goldsmiths. The rich were glad to make the deposit without interest; but more necessitous persons received fourpence per cent. per diem, and the goldsmiths realised a handsome profit by lending at a much higher usance to persons of real solidity, whose pecuniary matters were embarrassed by the troubles of the time. By and by they extended their business; they discounted bills; they advanced money to government on the security of the taxes; and the receipts for the cash lodged in their houses passed current from hand to hand under the name of Goldsmiths' Notes. The goldsmiths, in fact, became bankers, till the two businesses were separated by Mr Francis Child. On the site of his banking-house stood formerly the shop of Mr William Wheeler, goldsmith and banker, with whom Child was an apprentice. The apprentice married his master's daughter, as was frequently the case in the good old times; and at the death of his father-in-law, sinking the shop, he established a great banking business, which remains in full activity and undiminished respectability to this day.

The exact date of the commencement of this concern is not known, but its existing books go back to the year 1620. Hoares' began in 1680, and Snows' in 1685; and about the latter date a Bank of Credit was tried, but does not appear to have met with success. The want

of a great bank was so sensibly felt, that the idea became an *ignis-fatuus* of enthusiasts, and was made a stalking-horse by projectors. Nothing was talked of, nothing thought of, but money. Lottery upon lottery turned the heads of the people. Engulfed treasures were to be rescued from the bottom of the deep; pearl-fisheries were to pay impossible per centages; joint-stock companies juggled and cheated as an example to later times. At this moment an individual rose conspicuously amid the crowd, whose teeming brain originated the Bank of England* and the fatal Darien expedition.

William Paterson was a native of Dumfriesshire, and was educated for the church; but although he visited the West Indian islands on pretext of converting the heathen, it is supposed that he attached himself to the roving expeditions of the bucaners, either as a spectator or comrade in their adventures. On his return to Europe, he brought into the affairs of everyday life a brain heated by such an education of circumstances, and an imagination fired by the stories related by the wild men of the sea of mines of gold and gems, and rivers with Pactolean sands. His Darien scheme we can only allude to. Rejected in England, and in various continental countries, it met with so warm a reception among the poor and cautious Scotch, that they rushed to subscribe to the Company, as Sir John Dalrymple tells us, with an eagerness not exceeded by that with which they signed the Solemn League and Covenant. Every effort was made to crush the Company at the outset, more especially by the English ministry and parliament, who, among other reasons for their hostility, feared that if it succeeded, the Scotch would in time become so powerful as to separate themselves entirely from England. Nevertheless, in 1698, twelve hundred colonists, under the conduct of Paterson himself, sailed from Leith, and arrived in due time at the golden isthmus, where, instead of unheard-of treasures, they met only with disease, famine, the sword, and, above all, the determined hostility of the English government, which issued proclamations in the West Indies forbidding supplies to be furnished to the Scotch at Darien. The result was, that they were obliged to abandon the colony; and of the whole body, only thirty, including the projector, ever saw again the pier of Leith. Such was the originator of the Bank of England, which, in spite of the most violent opposition from goldsmiths, bankers, usurers, and politicians, was incorporated by royal charter four years earlier than the Darien expedition, on the 27th July 1694.

There were at this period only four considerable banks in Europe—those of Amsterdam, Venice, Hamburg, and Genoa: the first three being merely establishments for the convenience of the merchants, and the last connected likewise, for its own advantage, with the state by means of a perpetual fund of interest on public loans. It was on the model of this Genoese bank that the Bank of England was planned, which began business in Mercers' Hall, and then removed to Grocers' Hall, where the twenty-four directors and fifty-four secretaries and clerks were seen at work together in a single great room. The salaries at this time amounted to £4350; and it appears that interest of three or four per cent. was allowed upon deposits. Paterson was in the direction only one year, when, after his ideas had been made use of, 'the friendless Scot was intrigued

* History of the Bank of England, its Times and Traditions. By John Francis. 2 vols. Third edition. London: Willoughby. 1848.

* Paterson is also generally represented as the originator of the Bank of Scotland, which was established by an act of the Scottish parliament in 1695. We shall by and by show some reasons for doubting his alleged concern in the origin of this bank.

out of his post, and out of the honour he had earned.' These, however, are not the words of Mr Francis, who is inclined to receive with caution such easily-made accusations. Godfrey, the zealous coadjutor of Paterson, —for between these two the Bank may be said to have been established—met with a sadder fate, after as brief a career. He undertook the difficult task of carrying specie to William at Namur, and while in conversation with the king in the trenches, was killed by a cannon ball.

The directors had at first no fixed remuneration, but submitted to what the general court chose to allow them. Dividends were paid quarterly; and so small was the business, that in 1696, according to an account delivered to parliament, the balance in favour of the Bank was only £125,315, 2s. Indeed for the first ten years it was engaged in a struggle for existence, and so low in its treasure, that it was sometimes obliged to cash, by quarterly instalments, notes payable on demand. The government, however, stepped in to its assistance. A new charter was granted, extending to 1700, and on such favourable terms, that we hear of great fortunes being made, and one of £60,000 by a bank director. The public at the same time was benefited by the lowering of interest, running notes and bills being discounted at three per cent, and money advanced on merchandise at four per cent. This was a great change from the time of the old goldsmiths, although that was only a few years before, when the ministry was now and then obliged to solicit the Common Council for an advance of one or two hundred thousand pounds on the land tax, at ten or twelve per cent, and when the common councilmen themselves went round from house to house in their respective wards for the loan of money.

The convulsions produced by the South Sea Scheme in 1720 did not affect the Bank of England unfavourably. On the contrary, by the subsequent purchase of four millions of the stock of that illusive concern, it cleared above £600,000. In 1722, by a new subscription, the capital of the Bank was increased to £3,000,000; and at the same time was commenced the well-known RESERVE, or reserve fund laid aside for casualties, which has increased with the increase of the business, and has frequently proved of great service. In 1726 we find that no notes were circulated of less value than £20. The Bank removed in 1734 from the hall of the Grocers' Company, and established themselves in Threadneedle Street, on the site of the house and garden of Sir John Houbton, first governor of the establishment. The new office was comparatively a small structure, almost invisible to passers-by, being surrounded by private dwelling-houses, a church, and three taverns. In 1742 the charter was reconstructed, and forgery on the Bank, and trust-breaking on the part of its servants, were declared capital felonies. In the famous 'forty-five,' when the Highland army was at Derby, and London in momentary expectation of being sacked, we find the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street employed, somewhat indecorously, in warding off a run upon her, by employing her own adherents to present themselves foremost of the crowd with notes, for which they were paid in sixpences. This gained much precious time, without the sacrifice of specie; for the friendly creditors, making their exult by another door, immediately returned their small change to the treasury. About the same time she attempted a meaner, as well as a less successful trick upon her rival Childs', by collecting about half a million of their receipts, and sending them in at a single blow. The wary bankers, however, had got scent of the plot, and were provided with a cheque upon the enemy for £700,000, drawn by the celebrated Duchess of Marlborough. When the notes were presented in a great bag, they were examined singly, to give time for the cheque to be cashed in Threadneedle Street; and the malicious Old Lady was then paid in her own notes, which, chancing at the time to be at a

considerable discount, a large sum was made by Childs' upon the transaction.

The first forgery took place in 1758, after the Bank had freely circulated its notes for sixty-four years. The criminal was Richard William Vaughan, a Stafford linendraper, who was tempted to the deed by nothing more than a desire to pass for a rich man. At this time it was decided that the Bank was liable for the amount of stolen notes. In the following year, £15 and £10 notes were circulated for the first time, in consequence of an unusual scarcity of gold and silver. During the Gordon riots, we find the Bank engaged in actual warfare, with the old inkstands cast into bullets, and the clerks with swords by their sides instead of pens behind their ears. Military were posted within the walls lest matters should come to extremity; two assaults of the rioters were repulsed with great gallantry, Wilkes rushing out during the pauses of the fray, and dragging in some of the ringleaders with his own hands. Several persons were killed, and many wounded, in this skirmish, which inspired the directors with so wholesome a caution, that a military guard have ever since passed the night in the interior of the establishment. The officer on duty has a capital dinner for himself and two friends, and the hospitality of the City is said to be highly appreciated.

The Bank suffered more on an occasion of an opposite kind; for on the day of the proclamation of peace in 1783, the City was thrown into such a hubbub by the rejoicings, that the cashiers paid no fewer than fourteen forged notes of £50 each. This was the era of Charles Price, an exquisite rogue, who had tried dishonesty in almost every walk of life, and distinguished himself in all. Comedian—valet—lottery-office keeper—stockbroker—gambler—forger: such was the sequence of his career. 'He practised engraving till he became proficient; he made his own ink; he manufactured his own paper. With a private press he worked his own notes; and he counterfeited the signatures of the cashiers until the resemblance was complete. Master of all that could successfully deceive, he defied alike fortune and the Bank directors; and even these operations in his own house were transacted in a disguise sufficient to baffle the most penetrating.' His forgeries were so masterly, that some notes stood the examination of the ordinary Bank clerks, and were only detected (after payment) in passing through a particular department. He hired a servant by advertisement, whose curiosity was at length excited by being sent to purchase so many lottery tickets, and being always met on such occasions by his master in a coach, a foreigner apparently of some sixty or seventy years of age, with his gouty legs wrapped in flannel, a camel cloak buttoned round his mouth, and a patch over his left eye. 'But had he known that from the period he left his master to purchase the tickets, one female figure accompanied all his movements; that when he entered the offices, it waited at the door, peered cautiously in at the window, hovered around him like a second shadow, watched him carefully, and never left him until once more he was in the company of his employer, that surprise would have been greatly increased.' The servant was at length taken into custody, and told all he knew; but his master had vanished like a spirit, and the forgeries continued as usual. Price now varied his labours by setting to work upon the genuine notes, adding a 0 to a £10 note, and transforming other figures so dexterously, that on one day he pocketed £1000. But the devil always deserts his friends at one time or other; and a note he had given in pledge for costly articles of plate with which he graced expensive entertainments, was clearly traced, notwithstanding all his dodges and aliases, to Mr Price the stockbroker. Upon this, seeing that there was no escape, he took the part of the hangman into his own hands, and the cross-road and stake were the meed of the forger. In those days it was dangerous for a man to look mysterious. George Morland, when skulking in the suburbs out of the way of his creditors,

fell under suspicion, and was so closely hunted by the agents of the Bank, whom he mistook for bailiffs, that he fled back into London. The directors, learning from his wife that the object of their pursuit was only a great painter, somewhat out at elbows in the world, presented him with a couple of their own engravings, passing for L.20 each.

The history of the suspension of cash payments in 1797, and of the subsequent act *restricting* the Bank from paying in cash, is too long for this abstract. We must content ourselves with saying that the establishment was embarrassed by the constant 'Give! give!' of Mr Pitt, who had all the world at war, and that the people, confounded by the signs of the times, ran in crowds to their bankers, in town and country, to demand money for notes. In order that the public might be put to as little inconvenience as possible, L.2 and L.1 notes were issued; and that the Bank was not really injured in its resources, was proved by its subscribing in the following year L.200,000 to the voluntary contribution for carrying on the war. In the first four years after the introduction of small notes, eighty-five executions for forgery took place. About the same time, the Bank was robbed by one of their cashiers, of the name of Astlett, to the amount of L.320,000. This man was condemned to death, but permitted to live in prison. Another cashier, of a very different character, and whose name is better known, Abraham Newland, died in 1807, worth personal property to the amount of L.200,000, besides L.1000 a-year in landed estates. This large fortune is accounted for by the profits on public loans, a portion of which was always reserved for the cashiers' office.

In 1816, the Bank had attained to such a pitch of prosperity, that a bonus was declared in the shape of an addition of twenty-five per cent. to the capital stock of each proprietor. An act of parliament was necessary for this, and the directors were authorised at the same time to increase their capital to L.14,533,000, at which amount it still remains. In 1821, Mr Peel's famous currency bill came into operation, and cash payments were resumed. A fraud of a bank clerk named Turner was discovered this year, and the delinquent escaped still more easily than the last. Owing to some failure in the proof, he was found not guilty, and betook himself to the banks of the Lake of Como with his spoil, amounting to L.10,000. In 1824, Fauntleroy was not so fortunate. Although a banker and a gentleman, he met the death of a felon on the gallows. This was another bubble epoch. The country laboured under a plethora of capital, and cured itself by bleeding till vitality was almost extinct. 'All the gambling propensities of human nature,' says the Annual Register, 'were constantly solicited into action; and crowds of individuals of every description, the credulous and the suspicious, the crafty and the bold, the raw and the inexperienced, the intelligent and the ignorant; princes, nobles, politicians, placemen, patriots, lawyers, physicians, divines, philosophers, poets, intermingled with women of all ranks and degrees—spinsters, wives, and widows, hastened to venture some portion of their property in schemes of which scarcely anything was known but the name.' The result was as usual: and, as usual, the wits sported with the national calamity, one of them advertising a company for draining the Red Sea, in order to get out the valuables dropped therein by the Children of Israel during their passage, and the Egyptians in their pursuit. When the reaction came, the Bank added to the consternation by contracting its discounts. Banker after banker came toppling down, both in town and country, to the number of seventy-three in a month; trade was at a stand-still; and the public panic made everything still worse than it was. 'The gloom which pervaded the metropolis was universal. A vague feeling of uncertainty as to the issue ripened into an indefinite dread of consequences, almost as harassing as the worst reality. A general bankruptcy seemed impending. The impression—for it scarcely

amounted to a conviction—that the Bank itself, hitherto regarded as almost sacred, was sharing the danger of the time, added to the general anxiety. Up to this period, with the single exception of 1797, the term 'Bank' had been synonymous with safety. When, therefore, it was believed that, amid the general wrack and ruin, even the Bank of England was in danger, the great hall of the establishment witnessed an eager proffer of notes in exchange for gold, which, however, was met as promptly as it was made. No attempt was offered to withhold, as in 1797; no attempt to delay, as in 1745. It was probably partly owing to the unhesitating readiness with which the gold was paid as fast as it could be demanded, that the confidence of the public was so quickly restored. Had the holders of the notes felt that there was anything like hesitation, the alarm would have spread indefinitely, and the Bank must have suffered in proportion. 'Gold! gold!' was the cry on all sides; and it was answered by another coinage as well as that of the Mint. Counterfeit sovereigns appeared with the new national issue, and were eagerly taken, because they *looked* like money. A re-issue of small notes was still more essential; for in fact a great portion of the distress was owing to so many persons finding themselves destitute of a currency wherewith to carry on the business of life. The small notes, according to Mr Harman, 'saved the country;' and within a week after their appearance, the storm died away, and men were at leisure to clear the wreck. The projects brought during the mania into the market had nearly 6,000,000 shares, and required a capital of upwards of L.372,000,000. In the two years 1824 and 1825, L.25,000,000 was actually advanced by the English nation on foreign loans.

The establishment by the Bank of branch banks in the provinces appears to have excited much trading jealousy; but as these establishments at the present moment number only thirteen, there could not have been much cause for the feeling. During the reform fever in 1832, the Bank sustained the last run upon its gold made from political causes. In the same year the English nation made a vast onward stride in civilisation, by entirely remodelling the useless and brutal system of capital punishments. Forgery of bank notes was one of the crimes exempted, although the forgery of wills and powers of attorney was continued on the black list for a few years longer.

We have not thought it necessary to encumber this article with an account of the various renewals of the Bank charter. We may say, however, that it grew into a usage for the privileges of the incorporation to be *sold* to them by government from time to time. But we must not omit to say that the last renewal, in 1844, fixed the extent of the paper circulation at L.14,000,000; namely, L.11,000,000 on the security of the debt due for the public, and L.3,000,000 on Exchequer bills and other securities; and arranged that every note issued beyond that sum should have its representative in an equal amount of bullion. This year was distinguished in another way by the frauds of Fletcher and Barber, which excited much speculation at the time, chiefly on account of the doubt which appeared to exist of the guilt of the latter. The forgery of Burges in the following year is likewise too recent to have been forgotten by our readers. This year is the epoch of the great railway mania, of which we are now witnessing the close, and counting the cost. 'The history,' says a London banker, 'of what we are in the habit of calling the "state of trade" is an instructive lesson. We find it subject to various conditions which are periodically returning; it revolves apparently in an established cycle. First we find it in a state of quiescence—next improvement—growing confidence—prosperity—excitement—overtrading—convulsion—pressure—stagnation—distress—ending again in quiescence.'

We must now allow Mr Francis to describe the office of the Bank in his own words. 'The interior arrangements of the Bank of England are not the least remark-

able part of its economy. The citizen who passes it on his way to his counting-house, the merchant who considers it as an edifice where he gets his bills discounted or lodges his bullion for security, and the banker who regards it in his daily visits only as a place to issue the various notices that interest him, look on it with an indifferent eye. Even to the stranger its external appearance is almost lost in contemplating the nobler structure which looks down upon it. But to visit its various offices, to enter into the mode in which its affairs are conducted, and to witness the almost unerring regularity of its transactions, cannot fail to excite admiration. The machinery of Manchester on a small scale may here be witnessed. The steam-engine performs its work with an intelligence almost human, as by it the notes are printed, and the numbers registered, to guard against fraud. When the spectator passes from building to building, and marks each place devoted to its separate uses, yet all of them links in one chain, he cannot fail to be affected with the grandeur of that body which can command so extensive a service.

The most interesting place connected with the machinery of the Bank is the weighing-office, which was established a few years ago. In consequence of a late proclamation concerning the gold circulation, it became very desirable to obtain the most minute accuracy, as coins of doubtful weight were plentifully offered. Many complaints were made that sovereigns which had been issued from one office were refused at another; and though these assertions were not perhaps always founded on truth, yet it is indisputable that the evil occasionally occurred. Every effort was made by the directors to remedy this, some millions of sovereigns being weighed separately, and the light coins divided from those which were full weight. Fortunately the governor for the time being, before whom the complaints principally came, had devoted his thoughts to scientific pursuits, and he at once turned his attention to discover the causes which operated to prevent the attainment of a just weight. In this he was successful; and the result of his inquiry was a machine remarkable for an almost elegant simplicity. About eighty or one hundred light and heavy sovereigns are placed indiscriminately in a round tube; as they descend on the machinery beneath, those which are light receive a slight touch, and this moves them into their proper receptacle, while those which are the legitimate weight pass into their appointed place. The light coins are then defaced by the sovereign-cutting machine, observable alike for its accuracy and rapidity. By this 200 may be defaced in one minute, and by the weighing machinery 35,000 may be weighed in one day.

The following is an account of the *personnel*:—The supreme management of the Bank is vested in the whole Court of Directors, which meets weekly, when a statement is read of the position of the Bank in its securities, bullion, and liabilities. The directors have equal power, and should a majority disapprove of the arrangement, they might reconstruct it. Eight of them go out, and eight come in, annually, elected by the Court of Proprietors; and the system on which the affairs of the Bank are conducted is of course liable to change, as new directors may exert their individual influence on it. A list of candidates is transmitted to the Court of Proprietors, and the eight so recommended uniformly come in. Quakers and Hebrews are not eligible, although many are so well versed in monetary matters. When an individual is proposed as a new director, inquiry is always instituted concerning his private character.

The Bank, as we have seen, commenced business with fifty-four assistants, whose salaries amounted to £4350. The total number employed at present, according to Mr Francis, is upwards of 900, and their salaries exceed £210,000. Of this sum the governor receives only £500, and the directors £300 each; but these gentlemen doubtless are remunerated in another way.

Having now skimmed these interesting volumes, with Macpherson's 'Annals of Commerce' open before us, so far as they go, we have only to beg our readers to understand that Mr Francis is a devout admirer of the Bank of England throughout its whole history—any incidental remarks of our own which may be supposed to have another tendency notwithstanding.

THE OLD FLEMISH BURYING-GROUND.

AMONGST a widely-spreading relationship we reckoned the Flemish Quaker family of the Vanderheims, although circumstances had occasioned the ties of kindred to be overlooked or forgotten on both sides for many years. But at length circumstances led to a renewal of friendly correspondence and association, and to my becoming an inmate of their dwelling for a considerable time. This dwelling, with its gray and sombre aspect, had once formed part of an old convent, whose name, usages, and traditions had not altogether passed away, although they were refused a place in the memory of the Society of Friends. These good people found its spacious hall, vaulted chambers, great gates shutting out the world, and cloisters running round a square courtyard of shaven turf, with a sun-dial in the centre, surrounded by flower-beds, exceedingly agreeable to their peculiar habits and tenor of being; yet all peaceable and kindly as were their dispositions, they evinced undisguised repugnance when any allusion was casually made by the curious stranger touching on the bygone tales attached to their beloved home. The Vanderheims were among the commercial chiefs presiding over the quaint grass-grown Flemish town where they resided; whose green ramparts were unceasingly paraded by a few sentinels, ever keeping watch in mimic state. The town itself was as dull and slumberous-looking as the genius of its inhabitants, nestling amid waste dreary-looking sandhills, surrounding it on three sides, and stretching to the sea, while the fourth side presented an inland expanse of flat uninteresting country, interspersed with canals, and dotted here and there by a solitary windmill or a clump of stunted trees.

Coming from a gay French resort with elastic spirits and a free buoyant heart, this sojourn among my Quaker relatives apparently offered but slight prospect of enjoyment; and nought save a sense of necessity and obligation could have reconciled me to it, more especially on being introduced for the first time to three demure female cousins, my seniors by so many years, that with girlish impertinence I set them down as starched, cross-grained old maids. But this crotcheted passed away like other follies of youth and inexperience; and I now look back on the many monotonous hours passed in that quiet Flemish dwelling, with the youngest of these 'cross-grained' cousins for my sole companion, as on the most tranquil and smooth, if not the happiest portion of my life.

The strict unvarying regularity of the household arrangements, unbroken by hopes, fears, amusement, or excitement of any description, was only varied by the perambulations which I was permitted to take in company with Rahel Vanderheim, for whom walking exercise was prescribed by her medical attendant. She it was who readily undertook to make me by degrees an excellent pedestrian, and who daily brought bouquets of roses to my room; roses so exquisite in colour, rich in perfume, and peerless in form, that I became curious to learn from whence they were procured. The gardens in and around the town were far too scanty to afford a profuse supply; and if the honest Flemings coveted the possession of the blushing beauties as much as I did, there must be plenty of roscies *somewhere*. Rahel reminded me that the canals afforded easy means for the transport of all necessities—flowers and vegetables being thus mostly brought from a distance; and the flower-market offering a pleasing picture in the early morning-time, ere the nosegays were sold and dispersed, she promised to take me to see it. My grave cousin, however, reproved at the same time the enthusiasm with which I spoke of this.

'Thee indulgest too much warmth of speech,' said she gently, 'for a discreet young maiden; thee shouldst remember that, like these fair short-lived blossoms, thee too must fade and die: perchance didst thee know from whence these roses come, thee mightest not prize them so highly!'

'Come whence they may, Friend Rahel,' I laughingly exclaimed, 'they pass through your dear good hands, and must be purified by the process.' But a demure shake of the head was the only rejoinder, with whispered words of a lesson to be read from the serious pages of real life on the first convenient opportunity.

One bright summer's morning, when the sun had just risen above the ramparts, and the first slanting beams had not yet rested on the gay parterres around the dial, we sallied forth from the Vanderheim cloisters. I accompanied Rahel to the distant quarter of the town where the market-place was situated. Arrayed in a little close bonnet, and pretty modest cap plaited around her sweet delicate face, with a basket in her hand containing condiments of various descriptions, she looked the personification of benevolence, or a sort of *Sœur de Charité*, though in a different costume. The market-place was bounded on one side by the church, a fine old cathedral structure, the flower department being arranged beneath its sheltering walls, and forming an alley of sweets, picturesquely contrasting with the gray mouldering background. Near the end of this alley, and piled against a buttress of the sacred edifice, was a far more splendid collection of fresh and blooming roses than I had ever seen before, except in a highly-cultivated rosery; and there I doubt if they are found as remarkable as these, which had a peculiar richness and depth of colour, while they loaded the air with a perfume as delicious as if exhaled from a golden vase of veritable Persian attar.

The attendant fairy of the flowers was a young and innocent-looking Flemish damsel, who curtsied to Rahel with the welcoming smile of old acquaintanceship, speaking to her in their native dialect, which of course I could but slightly comprehend. I knew enough, however, to make out that they were no strangers to each other; that Rahel inquired concerning the health and wellbeing of an aged grandfather; and that the girl's name was Mimi: the contents of Rahel's basket, moreover, were intended for this aged grandfather's special use and benefit, while tearful eyes, grateful looks, and repeated curtsies on the part of pretty Mimi, acknowledged the kindness and solicitude of the good Rahel Vanderheim; and such a profusion of fairy roses were forced upon our acceptance, that surely never before had dirty *sous* been so profitably and delightfully exchanged.

On our homeward route, a rhapsody from me in praise of my blooming treasures was suddenly interrupted by Friend Rahel in these grave words: 'Maiden,' said she, 'these are roses of the Dead—reared amid desolation and decay, and thriving on mortality's corruption: many there be in this good town who would reject with aversion poor Mimi's gift of flowers from old St Lovendaal.' I cast a half-frightened glance on my lovely bouquet, half fearing to see it vanish away, even as the fruit found by the Dead Sea turns to ashes when about to be enjoyed; but notwithstanding Rahel's dislike to mystification, she deferred expounding the riddle until the following evening, when, after a long wearisome walk amid waste sand tracts, by the side of tame sluggish canals, we came to some broken ground, just sufficiently elevated to screen near objects from observation; and there, hidden in a hollow, partially surrounded by ancient yew-trees, was a deserted burying-ground.

The peasant liked not to pass that way at evening-fall; and as no road approached it, and it led to nothing, and nowhere, there it kept its long Sabbath of repose, resting in solitude and desolation. It was a quiet, holy spot, a few miles only from a populous town, but rising here a green oasis in the desert. Skulls and bones were scattered over the loose sandy surface; and here were curious moss-grown monuments; sunken headstones, with defaced inscriptions; quaintly-sculptured urns; broken

railings hung with wild festoons; but amidst all this array of decay and death, innumerable rose-trees in full and gorgeous bearing arose in graceful life-like pride, shedding their perfumed sweets over all, and silently keeping watch above the dead. They were evidently well-tended and cultivated—and this was indeed a unique and solemn rosery.

Beneath a spreading yew-tree stood a cottage, or rather a hovel (for it deserved no better name), and on a low stool before the door sat a blind man, of extreme age, whose long silver locks floated on his shoulders; the sightless eyes turned towards a golden sunset, the white lips moving silently, as if in prayer. A young girl advanced hastily towards us with delighted exclamations: it was Mimi, the Flemish flower-girl—and this was St Lovendaal's.

How many of these ancient graves the old man before us had helped to form it was impossible to imagine: he had been the sexton for more than half a century, and was still permitted by the authorities to occupy the same cottage where he had always dwelt.

Here his wife and all his children slept around him; Mimi being the only one of his numerous family whom God had spared to solace and support his declining life. Well and faithfully had the good granddaughter performed her appointed duty; working early and late, summer and winter, the industrious girl, by knitting warm worsted hose and caps, so much prized by the comfortable Flemings, and by the produce of her rosery, was enabled materially to assist in supporting the blind old man. Mimi was too proud to be the recipient of mere charity; and many townsfolk who knew her well, and respected her pious and patient endeavours, aided her honest labours by becoming ready and liberal purchasers of her handiwork; so that in fact Mimi had always orders to execute, and never remained idle. It was not so easy to dispose of the produce of her solemn garden, that being often rejected with superstitious abhorrence; and the florist's trade might not have thriven so well, had it not been for 'friends at court,' in the semblance of church officials; for during all the sacred ceremonies and summer fêtes of her religion, Mimi's lovely roses were in high request for church decoration and embellishment.

But when the season of flowers was over, and the wintry winds swept across the dreary sand tracts—when the murmurs of the distant ocean seemed to whisper an unceasing dirge for the dead—then this must have been a trying and isolated position for a young and timid maiden. Mimi had been urged to quit her desolate home, and to take up her abode with her venerable grandsire, in a comfortable dwelling, sheltered and surrounded with flourishing orchard trees, where honey-bees and fair garden plots abounded; for young Peterkin the market gardener, whose large vegetable stall in the market-place was near the flower alley, had long loved and wooed her for his wife. But Mimi knew—for her grandfather had often said so—that the fragile thread of the old man's life would be snapped at once on leaving the spot where his life had been passed, and where all his cherished associations were centered. Here he found his way about alone, and visited the graves where his beloved ones slept.

'Moreover,' said Mimi with a blushing smile, 'if Peterkin really loves me, he must wait patiently for grandfather, alas! has not many years to live. But the dear old man has a tender heart, and it would pierce him to think that his darling Mimi's happiness was only to be obtained through his death; so I have never allowed Peterkin to come here—grandfather knows nothing about it—and he never shall know that my love for him is shared by another. I am his sole earthly protector, though he often speaks of guardian angels being around us unseen. Ah, I would not lose grandfather's peaceful smile and fervent blessing for all else the world can give!'

Before quitting that Flemish town, I paid a last visit to St Lovendaal's burying-ground: it was during the early spring-time, and perfect solitude reigned around: the cottage was ruinous, and uninhabited, for the old man had been gathered to his fathers some months previously.

Mimi's face was seen no more at the stall beside the buttress of the gray cathedral church; but where greens and cauliflowers, mixed with bunches of wallflower, daffodils, and hyacinths, arose in towering heaps, the pious daughter, now the industrious and happy wife, still looked the same sweet patient Mimi as when presiding over the fairy roses from old St Lovendaal.

SUMMER EXCURSION IN GERMANY.

VIENNA TO PRAGUE AND DRESDEN.

On quitting Vienna on the 8th of June 1847, we did not anticipate that, before the lapse of twelve months, the Austrian monarchy would be shattered, and the emperor, poor little man, a refugee in the Tyrol! At the same time it was evident that affairs were not in a healthy condition, as they indeed never can be where a government rests its authority on armed force, and strives to keep the people in a state of child-like tutelage. An impression of this kind was not lessened as we proceeded on our journey.

At seven in the morning we left Vienna by railway into Bohemia, and at ten at night arrived in Prague, the capital of that dependency of the empire. The road makes a considerable detour by way of Olmütz; and the trains, besides frequent and long stoppages, have in some places only one line of rails. I may here, once for all, mention that the German railways seem to be well and carefully conducted. The trains seldom go at a quicker speed than twenty English miles an hour; the guards appear to be of the rank of subaltern officers in the army; and at almost every station time is allowed for taking a little refreshment—the offer of cakes, bread and butter, ham, and coffee, being generally made to the passengers. The Austrians being great eaters of sausages, these articles, of all sizes, were exhibited on the Prague line in great abundance. Another characteristic in German railway conveyance must not remain unnoticed: to every train is attached a carriage with a 'Rauche coupé.' This is a division in which passengers may smoke, and for which they can have a ticket on application. We generally kept as far away as possible from these odorous compartments. On the present occasion the journey, though slow, was not tiresome. Fortunately we were, for the most part of the excursion, in a carriage along with some gentlemen not indisposed to converse in French, and by whose agreeable manners the time was helped pleasantly away. One gentleman amused us not a little with an account of his efforts to learn English, the difficulties of which he declared to be altogether insurmountable. The word which had most puzzled him, and which, he said, he never could be made properly to utter, was *apple*; and he listened to our repetition of it with the deepest curiosity and wonder. Such is a specimen of the chit-chat with which tourists have sometimes an opportunity of whiling away the time in continental travelling.

The railway, in the first place, pursues a course up a valley yielding a small tributary river to the Danube; and by many bends and gradients, at length reaches the top of the high grounds which divide the valley of the Danube from that of the Elbe. Having attained this point, which is not an unpleasant rural scene, with here and there cottages of peasant farmers, an infant tributary of the Elbe, flowing towards the north-west, came into sight; and down the train went into the great basin of Bohemia—a beautiful country, in which vast fertile plains are bounded by mountains that seem to shut it out from the rest of the world. It is from this hollowed-out form of country that the Bohemians compare their land to a kettle. Darkness settled on the scene before we reached Prague; but, not to detain us at the terminus, an officer of police was admitted into the train a few miles from the town, and by him our passports were collected preparatory to their being *visé* on our arrival.

Prague, or, as the natives call it, Prag, is one of the

most curious old towns in Europe. Issuing in the morning from our hotel—the Blaué Stern, a modern edifice of immensely solid masonry, with a restaurant vaulted as if to be bomb-proof—we saw at a glance that, like Edinburgh, Prague possessed the air of a capital deserted by its nobles; and that houses of palatial grandeur, once the residence of princes, ambassadors, and abbots, and still ornamented with heraldic emblems, had sunk from their high estate, and now gave shelter to the meanest of the population. Prague, in short, is a wreck—a city ruined by the annihilation of Bohemian independence, and the flocking of the wealthier classes to Vienna. 'Whosoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.' Edinburgh and Dublin, as well as Prague, are well acquainted with the operation of that Scriptural truth. Latterly, by means of some patronising attentions from Austria, but chiefly from a native spirit of revival, and by becoming a central point in railway transit, this venerable city has shown signs of reanimation, or at least improvement; and accordingly, in several places we observed new streets springing into existence, and that gas-pipes were being laid in the principal thoroughfares.

Situated on the two opposite banks of the Moldau, which are here connected by a long and substantial stone bridge, ornamented with the statues of saints, the city covers a large space of ground, level on the right or east, but rising into a hill on the left side of the river. The town is chiefly on the right bank; and embosomed among narrow streets, lined with tall dingy houses, in this division lies the Judenstadt, or Jews' Town, a quarter to which our guide took care to conduct us as one of the curiosities of the city. Approaching the margin of the river, though little benefited by its waters, the Jews' Town bears a considerable resemblance to the closely-huddled thoroughfares of the more ancient part of Edinburgh. A body of Hebrews settled here in very early times; and their descendants, notwithstanding the cruel persecutions of the middle ages, so effectually maintained their position, that they acquired the privilege of jurisdiction as respects their own affairs; and this the Jews of Prague continue to possess. For the greater part wearing a long black dress, and with unshorn beards, they are readily distinguished from other citizens. The higher class here, as elsewhere, are dealers in money and articles of value, while those of a humble rank attend stalls for the sale of such old trumpery as is exhibited at doorways in the meaner parts of London. I could not walk through the confined alleys, in which aged members of the community were observed to be engaged in this humble traffic, without a sense of shame; for to the intolerant exclusiveness of Christians is alone imputable the narrow choice of professions to which the Jews find themselves condemned. Let us hope, however, that this long-cherished prejudice against an inoffensive and ancient, not to say deeply-interesting people, is at length vanishing from Europe.

The first thing to which we were conducted in the Judenstadt was the old synagogue; certainly a very curious place. It is said to be nine hundred years old; but this is evidently a mistake, for the style is that of the pointed arch; and the probability is, that the edifice was erected not earlier than the fifteenth century. The floor being below the level of the street, we descended to it by one or two steps; and the appearance of the interior, which is small, with a dingy light, may very well have impressed the notion of an antiquity at least double the reality. The roof and walls are blackened like a chimney, by the smoke from the lamps and torches which on certain occasions are burnt for several days together. The soot and dust of centuries remain untouched, as if too sacred to be meddled with; while the old deal furniture, shabby and rickety, seems to be falling in pieces. I could not learn the cause of this remarkable condition, which cannot be neglect, because the place, though deserted for newer and grander edifices on ordinary occasions, is still in use

for the more ceremonial solemnities of the Hebrew worship. At one end, on an elevation resembling an altar, and beneath a canopy, repose the holy books of the law, in the form of two large rolls of parchment, ancient, and curious, and beautifully written. These and other objects of interest we were permitted to examine without any restraint. From the old synagogue we went to the ancient burying-place of the Jews, which was at some distance, among equally confined thoroughfares. It is a species of back-court, secluded within a wall, and as thickly covered with trees and shrubs as the vast number of stone slabs will permit to grow. Originally level in surface, the accumulations of five hundred years have swelled the ground into a kind of hill; and it being no longer safe to inter more bodies in the spot, burials have for many years taken place elsewhere. By pathways among the bushes we went round the enclosure, which is encumbered with what might be considered heaps of loose rubbish, but which in reality are piles of stones, that, in obedience to an ancient usage, common to other nations besides the Jews, have one by one been brought hither, to be laid on the graves of relatives, or of individuals eminent for their worth.

We now crossed the Moldau by the bridge, and ascended through winding thoroughfares to the summit of the high ground on which stand the royal palace, the cathedral, and other interesting edifices. As we advance, we are more and more struck with the contrast between the original grandeur of the buildings and their present state of decay. Some are in ruin, and everything in the lonely streets speaks of desertion and poverty. Near the top of the hill, from which a fine view of Prague is obtained, we visited a church and convent of Premonstratensian monks; and by one of the brotherhood—an aged gentlemanly person in a white woollen robe—we were admitted to see the large and valuable library of the establishment, which occupies one apartment fitted up with much taste. The polite old man showed us sundry bibliographical curiosities, including a book with the autograph of Tycho Brahé, which had been presented to the library by Baron Hassenburg. From this convent we proceeded to another, to see a rich collection of reliquaries and other articles; and from that we were conducted across an open piece of ground, under a burning sun, to view what was formerly the abode of the kings of Bohemia, but is now a provincial palace of the emperor of Austria. It is a building of enormous dimensions, occupying the summit of a knoll; the back part overlooking a garden which stretches down a steep bank in the direction of the Moldau. The house is fully furnished in the French style, and in the state and family apartments are some fine pictures of Poussin, Carlo Dolce, Holbein, and Guido; and what is more interesting, portraits of the family of Maria Theresa. In one of these rooms, high above the garden in the rear, took place (May 23, 1618) the deed of violence which precipitated the Thirty Years' War. This act, as will be remembered by the readers of history, was the forcible entrance of certain Protestant chiefs into the council-room, occupied at the time by Sternburg, Martinitz, Lobkowitz, and Slavata, with Fabricius as secretary—all in the Catholic interest of the emperor of Germany and his protégé the king of Bohemia. Not receiving, as they thought, a becoming answer to inquiries which they addressed to the council as to their participation in the cruel edicts of the emperor, the Protestant nobles unceremoniously showed Sternburg and Lobkowitz out of the room, and seizing on Slavata, Martinitz, and Fabricius, pitched them from the window into the garden beneath.* Strangely enough, and to the surprise of all concerned, their fall of eighty feet did not kill the unfortunate counsellors, their marvellous escape being accounted for by the circumstance of their landing on a dunghill which happened to be at the

foot of the wall. The window from which this unjustifiable outrage was committed is of course pointed out to strangers. The last thing shown to us in connection with the palace was an ancient Gothic hall, fitted up with a chair of state and other seats, and used by the Bohemian dignitaries when taking an oath of allegiance to a new imperial sovereign. The emperor, I was informed, rarely visits Prague—one of the circumstances among others that has given umbrage to the Bohemians, and excited them to aim at an independent existence.

Adjoining the palace is the cathedral—an ancient Gothic structure, which has suffered much damage, both from the headlong ravages of iconoclasts, and the military bombardments to which Prague has at different times been exposed. It has a number of aisles and side chapels rich in monuments of historical interest, and also in articles in the precious metals, which adorn the different shrines. The popular saint in Prague is St John Nepomuk—a personage of great piety, who suffered martyrdom towards the end of the fourteenth century. The figure of the saint is seen in various quarters, and here, in the cathedral, is his mausoleum, consisting of a crystal coffin cased in one of silver, and supported by finely-sculptured figures of angels of the same metal. Nearly two tons of silver are said to be expended on these and other objects in this much-venerated shrine.

In descending to the lower part of the town, a number of houses traditionally interesting were pointed out; among others, the mansion of the soldier of fortune, Wallenstein, celebrated for his deeds during the Thirty Years' War, in which he was an antagonist to the illustrious Lion of the North, Gustavus Adolphus. In the intervals of his mad military career, Wallenstein lived here in more than regal splendour; but all memorials of his magnificence are now gone, with the exception of a few faded frescoes in one of the upper apartments, and a portion of an open arcade towards the garden.

While closing the subject of Prague, I am painfully reminded, by accounts reaching England through the daily press, that that unfortunate city, so quiescent at the time of my visit, is at present undergoing all the horrors of civil war. In quelling the revolt of the citizens, the town has been bombarded, from the heights near the palace, by the Austrian commandant, and great numbers of its houses laid in ruins. Whether this terrible act of repression will finally secure Bohemia to the Austrian crown, is matter of extreme doubt to all who are acquainted with the country. The people of Bohemia are of the Slavonic race, speak the Slave language, and hate the Germans, whom they look upon as intruders and oppressors. In the single circumstance of the Bohemian insurrection, it is dreadful to contemplate the condition of insecurity into which even the greatest of nations may be brought by keeping a forcible, and therefore immoral, possession of a country which the accident of war, or family connection, has placed in their power.

From Prague we designed to proceed to Dresden, by a route which lays open what is called the *Saxon Switzerland*; a remarkable district of country, intersected by the Elbe, and therefore approachable by steamers. Though a river of considerable size, the Moldau, which falls into the Elbe, is not navigable except by rafts and barges; and on this account it was necessary to cross the country to Obirstwy, the highest point on the Elbe reached by steamboats. The distance being only fourteen miles, we drove across in a voiture, passing in the course of our journey numerous bands of male and female labourers engaged in cutting the Prague and Dresden railway, which, when finished, will complete the line of rails from Hamburg to Trieste. Obirstwy is neither a town nor a village. It is a German château, which the proprietor lets as an inn, reserving to himself the use only of certain apartments—not a bad arrangement for a poor baron, and far from being unworthy of imitation in quarters nearer home. The inn part is the upper floors of the mansion; and here,

* See History of the Thirty Years' War, Chambers's Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Tracts, No. 120.

with as good accommodation as is to be found on the continent, we spent the night previous to descending the Elbe. At early morn the expected steamer having made its appearance in a creek behind the house, it soon received on board a large number of tourists, among whom were Haulbach and other artists from Munich, who had accompanied us down the Danube.

This was an exceedingly agreeable day. The weather was beautiful, the company on board a very pleasant set of people, the scenery in some places picturesque almost beyond imagination, and the *cuisine* and the management of the boat left nothing to be desired in the way of physical comfort. It was the second time within a fortnight we had travelled by steam under English direction. The engine was English, and so were the captain and his clerk; a circumstance which somehow inspires confidence the greater our distance is from home. The early part of the voyage, which is within Bohemia, discloses few striking points, for here the land is generally level; but as we approach the mountain ranges that form the boundary with Saxony, and through which the river has worn for itself an opening, the scenery undergoes an entire change. As we approach this picturesque district, the boat stops at a village on the left bank to land passengers for Tepitz, a fashionable watering-place among the hills, at a few miles' distance. Farther down, on the right, the boat stops for a few minutes at Tetschen; and between this place and Schandau we enter the mountain gorges, and glide out of the Austrian into the Saxon dominions. At Schandau, the vessel pauses for half an hour, during which, while the officers of the Saxon police examine passports, the douaniers give themselves the trouble of plunging their hands into the various carpet-bags and boxes which are strowed along the deck. Liberated from this rather flurrying affair, the steamer is again on her way; and in viewing the superb scenery which lines the banks of the smooth-flowing Elbe, we forget the petty annoyances to which we had been recently exposed.

We are now in the Sächsischer Schweiz, a designation far from correct, for the country has no resemblance to Switzerland—no snowy Alps, no lofty serrated mountains, no lakes, and no glaciers. The district needs no false appellation to popularise its beauties. These beauties are very peculiar. In the early ages of the world, geologically speaking, Bohemia was the bed of a lake whose waters gradually subsided as they found an outlet through the mountainous region on the north. Had this region been composed of granite or trap-rock, Bohemia in all probability would still have been at the bottom of an inland sea. The rocks, however, were fortunately a sandstone of different degrees of hardness; some parts being so soft as to yield to the abrasion of the waters, and finally to allow the drainage of the country by what we now call the Elbe. But this was a long process, which has left curious memorials in the existing masses of rock that were too hard to be carried away as sand to the German Ocean. For many miles along the river, and the back country on both sides, are seen tall blocks of stone, some rising as slender and rugged pillars to a height of three hundred feet, and others forming huge knolls as high as eight or nine hundred feet, with precipitous sides, partially clothed in vegetation, and so difficult of access, as to have afforded in some instances sites for castles during an age of insecurity and rapine. To obtain a proper idea of this extraordinary piece of country, it is necessary to climb to the top of one of the loftiest cliffs, and thence look abroad on the water-worn excavations. Over a large tract are seen variously-shaped masses of rock rising abruptly from an undulating plain, while in the centre of the scene the river is observed to pursue a winding course between steep crags or rich patches of meadow, composed of debris washed from the heights above. The most favourable spot for viewing this remarkable district, which is not less interesting to the geologist than to the artist, is the Bastey, a few miles from Schandau. The

Bastey (Bastion) is a tall rounded mass on the right bank of the river, rising almost from the water's edge to the height of six hundred feet. Connected partly with the adjoining cliffs, which are hung with a drapery of green shrubs, the Bastey has been made approachable to the summit by means of wooden galleries and stairs. Around the top is a railing, to prevent accidents, and from the bartizan which it protects we have the pleasure of looking down in safety into the profound river course, on which the steamer is diminished in appearance to a toy. At the gorge at the foot of the Bastey is a country inn, whence a foot tourist, landed from the steamboats which daily ascend and descend the Elbe, may make a variety of exploratory rambles.

To aid the picturesque character of the district, the rock in the protuberant masses lies in horizontal strata, causing a resemblance to huge blocks of masonry. In some instances the softer material being washed from beneath the incumbent masses, great caverns have been formed; and one of these, the Cowstall, a vault open at each end, is one of the leading curiosities in the neighbourhood. What has been favourable to the picturesque, tends unfortunately to its own destruction. The cliffy banks of the river, owned in patches by proprietors who care more for florins than scenery, are in various places sinking under the quarryman's hammer; and already long stretches of the rocky precipices have, in the shape of square blocks, been despatched in barges down the Elbe to Hamburg and other cities of the plain.

Towards the termination of the rocky banks we pass on the right Lilienstein, and on the left Königstein, two of the loftiest hill masses; noted, as well as the adjacent heights, in the war of 1813, when Napoleon made the Elbe the base of his operations. On the level top of the Königstein is an ancient fortress which commands the pass of the river, and is so strong, as to have defied the gunnery of the French invading army. Passing these places of historical interest, and likewise several villages, we enter the level country at Pirna. Shortly we pass on the right Pillnitz, a palace occupied as a summer residence by the royal family of Saxony. We are now almost within sight of Dresden, which, occupying a low situation level with the river on its left bank, is speedily reached by the steamer; and here terminates our excursion by water.

SYMPATHY AND ITS ECCENTRICITIES.

SYMPATHY may well be considered one of the noblest attributes of man, and seems, as it were, the mark of his Divine origin. All his generous feelings—the readiness to 'rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep'—have their rise in sympathy—that great bond which unites the society of mankind, and tends to the good of all. Sympathy even subsists between man and the lower creatures in no inconsiderable degree. Every one knows how the dog and the horse sympathise with their master, and how many instances are on record of the attachment shown by various creatures of different species to individuals of the human race, and how much man's sympathy for the lower creatures has been made subservient to their comfort. Beattie, in his Essay on Music and Poetry, observes, 'sympathy with distress is called compassion or pity; sympathy with happiness has no particular name;' and Adam Smith, in his 'Theory of Moral Sentiments,' defines it as 'a fellow-feeling with the passions of others'—that is, with such as we do not disapprove of. Neither of them, however, attempts to explain how its effects are produced—effects which we know are in a moment conveyed with all the rapidity of an electric shock. How it acts instantaneously on the nerves we cannot tell, but must rest satisfied that it is one of the phenomena of our being, depending, in the words of the learned commentator, Adam Clarke, 'on certain laws of nature, the principles of which have

not as yet been duly developed.' However, it is evident to all that without this gift life would be divested of happiness, interest, and pleasure. We are scarcely aware how many of our feelings originate in sympathy; from it associations spring, and that deep interest which we take in passing events in which we ourselves have no concern: it transports us at once into the pitiable situation in which we see others, although it may be that those who are placed in it are utterly incapable of feeling it themselves. Thus we feel the most tender pity for the dead and for the insane, and often blush for a fault or rudeness committed by those who are perfectly indifferent or unconscious that they have been guilty of such.

Actuated by sympathy, the patriot devotes himself to the service of others, identifying himself thoroughly with those who have inhabited the same spot of earth, and sacrificing every personal advantage to the attainment of some benefit for them. The patriotism of the dispersed race, and all their heart-yearnings after a home which they never saw, arises from a deep sympathy with those from whom they are sprung. The indulgence of this feeling, even when it casts a shade of the deepest melancholy, is attended by such a tender and exquisite enjoyment, that none would wish to forego it; and, as if it were to fix and strengthen it in the mind, it is called into action in mere matters of taste and fancy. An affecting tale, a pathetic air, a touching subject brought vividly before us by the painter's or the sculptor's skill—all awaken a sadness that is so pleasurable, that there is no greater gratification; the deepest tragedies are attended by crowds, and the nearer the illusions of the stage can bring them to reality, the more they please. Indeed when the representation is divested of an air of reality, or when a story in itself of an interesting character wants it, he no longer takes any satisfaction in them; while the wildest and most improbable fictions gratify, if the characters which they portray are made to act as would be natural in the situations in which they are placed—the reality of the portrait in one respect inviting our sympathy so as to make us forget its extravagance in another.

The susceptibility of genius to every touch of sympathy, and the power of awakening it in others, are perhaps its most distinguishing marks, and appear to be quite essential to its development. Whatever makes an impression on the man of genius excites some sympathy. In visiting ruins, he does not feel the mere pleasure of viewing them in their picturesque aspects, but finds a deeper interest in conjuring up to his imagination the remote times when they were as yet unscathed, and can sympathise with those who once trod the solemn aisles or lingered in the festive halls. His power of exciting the sympathy of others does not lie in the elaborate display and elegant finish of his art, whatever it may be, but in the earnestness with which he gives expression to his own feelings. Gluck was frequently heard to say, that when he was going to sit down to compose, he strove to forget that he was a musician—so necessary did he find it to give his whole mind to those passions which he wished to express. National ballads, composed under the influence of native scenery and feelings familiar to the clime, have such a powerful effect, that every one feels the justice of an observation made by one who well understood human nature.—It matters not who makes the law, provided you take care who writes the songs.' It has ample proof in the effect produced by the 'Ranz des Vaches' on the Swiss, when heard in lands distant from their home. All the tender sympathies linked with their native mountains and those they have left swell at the heart with such intensity, that they are frequently known to pine away and die of the fond yearning after home. Sir Joshua Reynolds once found himself affected to a considerable degree in the same manner. It was while he was abroad, that one evening, at the opera in Venice, an English ballad was played by the band, in compli-

ment to the English gentlemen who were present. It happened to be the one which was the favourite in London when Sir Joshua was there. 'He had heard it played and sung in every street and in every company,' as we are told by Allan Cunningham: 'it brought back fond and tender recollections of home, and longings after social intercourse with friends, and all the happiness and pleasure he had enjoyed: tears started to his eyes, and he returned to England.' One of the most engaging private singers that ever charmed an audience had no power of voice, but had such exquisite expression, as he adapted his lays to his native melodies, as never failed to awaken a responsive feeling in every bosom, and few could ever afterwards hear these airs without having their sympathies with the feelings to which the bard had given expression revived. The sympathy over which Handel had such power was, in his latter days, transferred from the subjects with which he had so long delighted the public to personal feelings for himself. As the sightless old man took his place at the organ, and threw his whole soul into a sublime voluntary, all listened with breathless veneration; but when his fine composition—

'Total eclipse—no sun, no moon—
All dark amid the blaze of noon'—

was sung by Beard with deep pathos, it was so descriptive of Handel's own situation, that everybody was affected to tears.

The skilful orator knows well that the most simple appeal to the sympathy of his auditors will produce an effect which all the ornaments of rhetoric would never achieve. It was this power of awakening sympathy that made Sheridan's memorable speech on the trial of Warren Hastings so effective, that it was absolutely necessary to adjourn the proceedings for some time, to leave an interval for feeling to subside, that judgment might not be warped. Kirwan the celebrated preacher, whose eloquence drew together such immense crowds in the churches of Dublin, was so successful in his appeals to the sympathies of those who heard him, that the sums which he collected for various charities were quite extraordinary—many among his congregation not only emptying their purses, but stripping themselves of whatever ornaments they had about them. Rings, watches, and even the epaulets of officers have been found on the plate handed round for the collection. On one occasion, while he stood in the pulpit to plead the cause of the Orphan School, he was taken suddenly ill: he looked mournfully round, and then merely pointed to the children, who were ranged in the aisle beneath him, and almost fainting, said, 'Feed my lambs,' and burst into tears: the simple appeal touched every heart, and the collection on that day exceeded any he had yet made. But it is not alone in the excitement of the most tender and lively emotions that the power of sympathy is seen—it has frequently produced effects of a startling, and in some instances of a fatal nature.

The sympathetic feeling has been so overpowering in some cases as to cause death. Among several which are well authenticated, is one of a boy who was taken to see an execution, who became so overcome by pity, that he fell back and died. The same have been frequently known to lose their senses by being confined in madhouses with those who were out of their reason; and it has sometimes happened that those without a shade of superstition have caught its tone from those who were its victims. The earnestness with which Blake the gifted painter gave expression to the wild delusions of his fancy, in his conversations with the visionary beings in whose presence he so often imagined himself, so far influenced the sympathies of some acute and sensible persons, that 'they shook their heads, and hinted that he was an extraordinary man;' and thus were little short of acknowledging their belief in the reality of the enthusiast's illusions. His wife, who was ever by his side, and listened to his discourses with

those shadowy beings that he believed were with him, was firmly convinced that *he* both saw and heard them, though she could not. It is still more strange that many have been borne along the tide whose current they had previously been anxious to have seen stayed. There is something very exciting in the animated expression of popular feeling, and it has often happened that it has awakened sympathy in those opposed by judgment and sentiment to the cause which it passionately espoused, and led them on to act with the multitude. A young person well known to us went to one of those great meetings held in the south of Ireland in the year 1829 with feelings quite averse to the object of the assembly; but when he saw the crowd decked with their laurel branches, and found himself in the midst of the enthusiasm which pervaded all—when he saw handkerchiefs waving, and hats thrown into the air, and heard the loud acclamations of all about him—he felt his spirits become strangely agitated, and in a few hours returned to his home, his hat decorated by the distinguishing badge of the meeting—a huge sprig of laurel. It was thus with a lady of sober mind and sedate habits, whose conviction was against any faith in the unknown tongue, to which gift Mr Irving's church laid especial claim. She entered his chapel with a thorough horror of the delusion; but when she witnessed the excitement which prevailed—the eager attention of the congregation—the devoted and enthusiastic bearing of those who believed themselves suddenly endowed with the miraculous power—she felt very strange exciting movements in her mind; and as she listened to the wild jargon, she said that she was seized with an almost irrepressible desire to speak too in that mysterious tongue.

There is a very remarkable instance of the effect produced on a person of quick sympathetic feelings in the case of Charles Lamb, who went to see a farce which he had written, and for which he anticipated the most flattering success. Long before it was brought to a conclusion, loud and vociferous expressions of disapprobation sealed its fate; they were so vehement and hearty, that Lamb caught the infection, and his voice was loudly raised in the midst of the uproarious tumult, shouting with all his might and main, 'Off! off!' Adam Smith observes that our sympathy for others arises from our imagining ourselves in the same situation in which they are placed; it is this, he thinks, which makes us shrink and draw back our leg or arm when we see a stroke aimed and ready to fall upon the leg or arm of another. 'The mob,' he goes on to say, 'when they are gazing at a dancer on the slack-rope, naturally writhe, and twist, and balance their own bodies, as they see him do, and as they feel that they themselves must do in his situation.' Indeed this propensity to imitate the actions as we catch the feelings of others, is undoubtedly one of the distinguishing marks of sympathy. In Boerhaave's academical lectures on diseases of nerves, he mentions a very remarkable case of a young man who was under the influence of this imitative sympathy. He says 'he was addicted from his infancy to so great a degree of sympathy, that he would immediately imitate all motions made by others, and that without any inclination, and even against his inclination; inasmuch that when he walked the streets he was obliged to look on the ground, to sit in company with his eyes shut, or to turn his face from his companions. If he saw a man shaking his head, that moment he would shake his own head; if he saw him laugh or smile, he would laugh or smile with him; if any one uncovered his head, he would do the same; if one danced, he would get up and dance along with him: in short, whatever he saw, he would mimic it immediately, in spite of himself. If his companions laid fast hold of him and tied his arms, and he then saw any one gesticulating and playing antics, he struggled hard to get loose, and felt within him the strongest motions, which he was not able to conquer. If asked what he was doing, he said he knew not, but was so

accustomed from his youth, and begged to be left alone, because his head ached from such motions, and he was greatly disturbed in mind, and withal as much fatigued as if he had done them of his own accord.'

Sympathy has indeed its eccentricities, and many of the mysterious nervous affections seem peculiarly under its influence. The coughing of one person often induces it in another, and every one knows how irresistibly catching yawning is. It is said to have frequently happened in crowded churches and other large assemblages, that when a female has been suddenly seized with hysterics, others have been quickly affected in the same way; and there are many instances of the same kind in schools, when girls, from witnessing a schoolfellow under an attack, have been suddenly seized with the same disorder. There are accounts on record of the spread of disorders which were neither contagious nor infectious, so that it would appear that the same state of the nerves which prevails in the sympathy that prompts imitation must exist in these strange affections.

It appears evident that any deviation in the affections from their natural course is productive of evil, and we may perceive that it is remarkably so with regard to sympathy; and yet though liable to such strange and fatal eccentricities, we feel that this quality is absolutely essential to our wellbeing. So necessary did some physicians consider it towards effecting a cure, that they held an opinion that both physician and patient should have faith in the prescribed remedy, to insure its success. However questionable this assertion may be deemed, the necessity of finding some one to sympathise with our feelings is felt in all the concerns of life, from the most important event, to the most trifling amusement. The being cut off from this is perhaps what renders solitary confinement the most unendurable of punishments. It is remarkable how those who are deprived of their accustomed intercourse with their fellow-creatures, will endeavour to substitute something to satisfy their craving for sympathy: they learn to treat one of the lower creatures as a friend who can participate in their feelings. Many have opened their hearts to the winds and the woods. We knew a foreigner who did not understand English when first he arrived here, and could meet with no one who understood his native language; he afterwards described most vividly the uneasy state of his mind, which only found relief when he addressed the trees in his own language; and he would stay among them discoursing to them for hours together. The case of Phebe Hasell is remarkable: she was for years disguised as a common soldier; but she felt such a forcible impulse to repose a confidence, that she imparted her secret to a hole which she dug in the ground. When Sir Joshua Reynolds had nearly lost his sight, he made a pet of a little bird; and when apart from society, and no longer able to occupy himself with his painting, he would walk about his apartment with his little companion perched upon his hand, to whom he chatted as if it could understand all that he said.

In this hurried view of sympathy, we have felt more than once that, were we inclined to speculate upon a subject beyond our reach, we might indulge in the anticipation of the more vivid development of this wonderful characteristic, as being a probable means of increased happiness and delight.

POEMS BY A MECHANIC.*

It is in our day no special wonder to find men devoting the moments they can snatch from the daily routine of manual labour to intellectual studies or enjoyments. But instances of this kind are not yet so common that we can afford to pass them by without notice; and at the present moment we are admonished by the date of a little volume before us that we have neglected one of

* Poems and Songs, Scotch and English. By Alexander Mac-lagan. Edinburgh: Tail.

the most urgent duties of the periodical press. The 'Poems and Songs' that claim our tardy attention are in some instances not merely refined in sentiment, but exhibit throughout an easy elegance of composition which is rarely found in works of the class. In two or three of the pieces there is the strength, rudeness, roughness, nay, vulgarity if you will, which many suppose to be the prevailing characteristic of the mind of a workman; but in the external mechanism even of these there is a delicacy almost amounting to fastidiousness, not always found in the productions of the idle and the educated.

Neither in sentiment nor versification does the following little poem bear any mark of a handicraft employment:—

THE EVIL E'E.

An evil e'e hath look'd on thee,
My puir wee thing, at last;
The light has left thy glance o' glee,
Thy frame is fading fast.
Wha's frien's, wha's faes, in this cauld warld
It's e'en richt ill to learn;
But an evil e'e hath look'd on thee,
My bonnie, bonnie bairn!

Your tender bulk I happit warm,
Wi' a' a mither's care,
I thought nae human heart could harm
A thing sae guid an' fair;
An' ye got aye my blessing when
I tolled your bread to earn;
But an evil e'e hath look'd on thee,
My bonnie, bonnie bairn!

The bloom upon thy bonnie face,
The sunlit o' thy smiles—
How glad they made ilk eerie place,
How short the langsome miles!
For sin' I left my minnie's cot,
Beside the Brig o' Earn,
Oh ours has been a chequered lot,
My bonnie, bonnie bairn!

I can forgie my mither's pride,
Wha drave me frae my hame;
I can forgie my sister's spite—
Her heart maun bear its blame;
I can forgie my brither's hard
And haughty heart o' ain,
But no the e'e that withers thee,
My bonnie, bonnie bairn!

I ken that deep in ae black breast
Lies hate to thee and me;
I ken wha bribed the fiends that press'
Thy father to the sea:
But hush!—he'll soon be back again
Wi' faithfu' heart, I learn,
To drive frae thee the evil e'e,
My bonnie, bonnie bairn!

We can afford only one other specimen; but we think it enough in itself to justify the praise we have bestowed upon this small unpretending volume.

I KEN A FAIR WEE FLOWER.

I ken a fair wee flower that blooms
Far doon in yon deep dell;
I ken its hame, its bonny hame,
But where, troth I'll no tell:
When rings the shepherd's e'enng horn,
Oft finds that soothing hour
Stars in the sky, dew on the earth,
And me beside my Flower.

It is not from the tints o' day
My gentle Flower receives
Its fairest hue, nor does the sun
Call forth its blushing leaves:
In secrecy it blooms, where Love
Delights to strew his bower,
Where many an unseen spirit smiles
Upon my happy Flower.

Ah! weel ye guess that Fancy gives
This living gem o' mine
A female form, a' loveliness,
A soul in't a' divine—
A glorious e'e that rows beneath
A fringe o' midnight blue;
Twa yielding lips wi' Love's ain sweets
Aye melting kindly through!

'Tis a' the wealth that I am worth,
'Tis a' my praise and pride,
And fast the hours flee over me
When wooing by its side;
Or looking on its bonny breast,
So innocently fair,
To see the purity and peace,
And love that's growing there.

Wi' softest words I woo my Flower;
But wi' a stronger arm
I shield each gentle opening bud
Frae every ruthless harm.
The wretch that would wi' serpent wile
Betray my Flower so fair,
May he live without a cheering friend,
And die without a prayer!

A VOICE FROM LOUISIANA.

IN the course of our literary labours, now extending over a period of sixteen years, it has ever been our object to avoid as far as possible all speculative matters on which large sections of people differ; and that not only as respects our own country, but other quarters into which our sheets may happen to travel. Some persons may think it was wrong to make this compromise, as it might be termed; but entertaining a strong opinion as to its necessity for insuring success in our peculiar course, it was made, and the engagement has ever been carefully adhered to. One consequence of this forbearance has been the diffusion of our publications very far beyond the limits of Scotland or England. In North America, and more particularly since the lowering of the import duty on books to ten per cent. *ad valorem*, the circulation of the works in question has been very considerable. From Boston, Massachusetts, many thousands of our cheap sheets and volumes are now disseminated, as from a centre, over the northern portion of the Union and Canada. Latterly, they have found their way into Louisiana and other southern states. There, however, for the first time, are they now stopped, and their local distributors so terrified, as to be obliged to withdraw a portion of them from circulation. Henceforth our winged sheets, like birds of ill omen, are to be caged at New Orleans: it is not likely that they will in future get even that distance, but be shot down in the attempt to cross the Carolinas. This curious fact has reached us through the American papers, and calls to be explained to our readers as something beyond a joke.

Avoiding, as has been said, topics on which there exists a marked and natural difference of sentiment, we have never considered that the principle *that every man has an inherent and indefeasible property in himself*, ought to be approached with the same reluctance. Slavery in all its forms, without regard to colour of skin, we have not hesitated on all proper occasions to describe as a heinous transgression of the law of God, and a trampling upon the rights of man. This it is which, in connection with our publications, has provoked the hostility of the south. A truth universally acknowledged by the humane and rational to be altogether beyond controversy, is nevertheless controversial in certain parts of America; or, more correctly speaking, is esteemed so dangerous, as to be entirely excluded from discussion. The article immediately concerned in causing the commotion now referred to, is an account of Slavery in America, forming the twenty-seventh number of 'Chambers's Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Tracts,' a work lately completed in twenty volumes, which, independently of this unfortunate brochure, has been

favourably received and spoken of by the reading world beyond the Atlantic. The account, which was drawn up with much care from the writings of respectable travellers, and which embodies no violent sentiment—being, in fact, what would be termed by many too moderate a view of American slavery and its consequences—is amusingly enough ascribed to the 'Abolitionists,' and is said to abound in falsehoods, although where or what these are, it has not been found convenient to mention. To those who are in the habit of looking upon slavery as a thing for which no honest man could offer one syllable of excuse, the following extracts from 'Le Courier de la Louisiane' (May 19 and 22), a newspaper published in French and English at New Orleans, and purporting to be the 'official paper of the United States, state of Louisiana, first municipality,' will probably be read with some degree of surprise:—

'LOOK OUT, CITIZENS OF THE SOUTH.

'The Abolitionists have a variety of ways and means for circulating their doctrines, even down here in this remote part of the Union. They have book-hawkers at work, who go from door to door offering literary works for sale with titles from which no one would suspect that the works themselves are tinctured with negro principles. We have seen a work in several volumes, beautifully printed and bound, which has been extensively spread over the Southern States in the mode we have indicated; and yet a considerable portion of one of the volumes is occupied with the grossest falsehoods and misrepresentations respecting negro slavery in the South. Not only have the publishers resorted to false accounts of the manner in which our slaves are treated, but they have got up engravings in the book, conveying notions of the life led by our slaves, of the most repulsive and falsest nature.

'This work, so far from deserving the patronage of southern people, ought to be kicked into mud holes, or sent to kindle fires under the sugar kettles.

'In order that every one may know this work when it comes in his way, we give the title at full length: "Chambers's Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Tracts," republished at Boston. It comprises several volumes, as we observed above, and is handsomely printed and bound: *hunc tu caveto—hic niger est.*'

'CHAMBERS'S MISCELLANY.

'On Friday last we noticed the sale of this book in the South, and cautioned our fellow-citizens against it, as containing an article relative to "Slavery in America" most unjust and injurious to the Southern States. This article is in the third volume of the work, and it deserves the character which we gave it. It is indeed a revolting, distorted, and false picture of the treatment to which slaves, as well as free people of colour, are subjected in this country; and under the impression, as we were, that it was hawked from door to door for sale, we were quite right in speaking of it as we did. But we feel great satisfaction in stating that Mr Josiah Adams, the agent for the Boston publishers, called upon us and stated that as soon as he discovered the obnoxious article to which we alluded, he stopped the circulation of the book, and deposited in a box all the copies he had on hand with the intention of returning them to the publishers. He also stated that he went to the few persons who purchased the work, and asked permission to cut out that part of it which had given offence. Mr Josiah Adams is a worthy, high-minded gentleman, who abhors the doctrines and practices of the Abolitionists, and would undergo any loss of property, or sustain any privation, rather than be instrumental in promoting their views. He informs us also that the Boston publishers are far from being tinctured with Abolition principles. In correcting the impression which our notice of this work may have made upon the public mind, we conceive that we are doing an act which is due to one who is perfectly innocent of all

intention to become a tool of the Abolition gang, and who in reality holds them in as much odium as we ourselves do.'

All this is very bad, but in its very badness there is a drollery. How we pity, and yet cannot help laughing at, poor Josiah Adams! Frightened out of his senses at having sold a book 'tinctured with negro principles,' like a judicious bibliophile, he hurries away to the purchasers of the volume, and begs they will permit him to cut out the obnoxious article! Then how thankful he is to thrust the whole mass of delinquency into a chest under lock and key! And lastly, how he posts off to explain everything to the editor of the 'Courier,' and beseech his mightiness to set him right in the eyes of the Louisianian world! He abhors the doctrines of the Abolitionists; would scorn to be a tool of the gang; would undergo any loss of property, or sustain any privation, rather than be instrumental in promoting their views! Good Josiah Adams; slavery-tolerating, freedom-hating, innocent, kind, dear Josiah Adams, we hope that your explanations have been indulgently received by a discerning public; and that under that paragon of constitutions in which all men are declared to be 'born equal,' you have been neither whipped, nor tar-and-feathered, nor hooted out of society, but are going on selling books as usual, happy to have got rid of what threatened to bring you within an inch of destruction!

Talk of a censorship of the press! Has any of the old European governments ever been more unscrupulous in suppressing what was displeasing to it in literature, than the press of Louisiana has been on the present occasion? Talk of the obnoxious article containing falsehoods! Does it embrace anything more severe than the following advertisement, which occurs in the newspaper that attacks it?

'SUCCESSION OF JOSEPHINE FRANKLINE ELEYTAS, DECEASED.

'Second District Court of New Orleans.—By virtue of, and in obedience to, an order of sale, dated May 19, 1848, and to me directed by the Honourable the Second District Court of New Orleans, in the above-entitled matter, I will proceed to sell at public auction, in the Rotunda of the City Exchange, St Louis Street, between Chartres and Royal Streets, on Friday, June 23, 1848, at twelve o'clock, A.M., for account of said succession, the following named slaves, viz:—

'Susan, aged about twenty-five years, with her two children, named Joseph, aged about three years, and an infant girl aged six months.

'And Ann, aged about twenty-six years, with her three children, named Mary, aged upwards of ten years; Susan, aged about five years; and an infant girl aged about sixteen months.

'Terms.—For the slave Ann and her children, cash; and for the slave Susan and her children, one year's credit, for approved endorsed notes, secured by mortgage on said slaves until final payment.

JOHN L. LEWIS,
Sheriff of the Parish of Orleans.'

To ourselves, commercially and otherwise, the denunciations of the Louisianian press are matter of extreme indifference. Writing for no party, and with a boundless reliance on the efficacy of TRUTH, JUSTICE, and MERCY, we do not fear being able to find an audience sufficiently wide for all our reasonable desires.

USE OF THE HOUSE-FLY IN TEACHING.

An entomologist of high reputation sends us a brief commentary on a passage in 'Hints to School Trainers,' of the Glasgow Normal Training Seminary, written by Mr Stow, its intelligent director. 'I was glad,' says our friend, 'to observe so striking an instance of the superiority of Mr Stow's plan of training over that of merely teaching, in imparting to a child a thorough knowledge of the subject brought before him, because it so strongly confirms the

opinions I have long held as to the best way of teaching natural history in schools. I have often said that if I were a schoolmaster, my first lecture to the boys should be on the common house-fly, and my exordium, "Now, boys, all of you run up that wall, and perch yourselves on the ceiling, backs downwards, and stay there till I tell you to come down." This, besides rousing their attention, would of course excite a laugh, and then would come the question, "But why can't you run up a wall as well as a fly can, and, like it, remain on the ceiling?" Some sharp lad (if allowed, as they ought to be, to interrupt the lecture every minute with their queries) would probably answer, "Because flies are much *lighter* than boys;" and then would follow proofs by actual experiment, that bodies much lighter than flies cannot remain against a wall, or on a ceiling, because prevented by the laws of gravitation (which should be very generally explained if they had not been before), unless counteracted by some vital power of adhesion; and an explanation, by means of a microscope, of the various theories proposed for solving this difficult and not yet thoroughly-understood problem, concluding this part of the lecture by referring to this as a striking instance what marvels yet remain unexplained in the economy of the commonest insects, and of the beautiful provisions of the Father of all for their wellbeing and enjoyment. You will perceive that this very small fraction of the history of the house-fly, thus treated on the Glasgow plan of "training" the pupil to see all the difficulties of the question, and helping him to solve them, would occupy a full hour or more; but how infinitely more solid and extensive would be the knowledge thus imparted! In fact the common house-fly, on this plan, might be made the peg on which to hang the whole outline of entomological science, and far more effectually than by any dry regular abstract, such as is usually given.

SMOKING.

The following observations on the use of tobacco are from an Ipswich temperance tract:—Dost thou smoke, Bill? said a tall, lean, sickly-looking youth to a fine, robust, healthy-looking lad the other day, as they passed me in the street; while at the same time a cloud of tobacco smoke came directly in my face, which made me wish most heartily that Bill did not smoke. I need not say how glad I was to hear the rosy-looking lad say, 'No, I don't.' Just as this conversation took place, two dashing young men passed me smoking cigars, the one about seventeen, the other about eighteen years of age. Turning my footsteps homeward, I could not help pondering on this almost universal practice of smoking, pursued alike by old and young, and ever and anon some of the faces of my neighbours and acquaintances would present themselves to my recollection, and never was I more surprised to find, on reflection, how closely were linked together great smokers and poverty—great smokers and pallid looks—great smokers and want of cleanliness. I took down my cyclopaedia, and looked for the word 'tobacco.' 'Tobacco,' says the compiler of the book, 'contains an oil of a poisonous quality, which is used in some countries to destroy snakes, by putting a little on the tongue; on receiving it, the snake is seized with convulsions, coils itself up, and dies; and what is very singular, becomes almost as stiff and hard as if it was dried in the sun.' 'I have been,' says a very eminent medical writer, 'now twenty-three years in extensive practice, and I never observed so many pallid faces and so many marks of declining health, nor have ever known so many hectic habits and consumptive affections as of late years; and I trace this alarming inroad on young constitutions principally to the pernicious system of smoking cigars. I am entirely convinced that smoking and chewing tobacco injure ultimately the hearing, smell, taste, and teeth. The practice of smoking is productive of indolence; it opens the pores of the head, throat, neck, and chest, and then going into the cold, your pores are suddenly closed—hence arise disorders of the head, throat, and lungs.' Mr Curtis, in his observations on health, says, 'The excessive use of tobacco, in whatever shape it is taken, heats the blood, hurts digestion, wastes the fluids, and relaxes the nerves. A patient of mine, who used to boast of the number of cigars he could smoke in a day, produced ptyalism or salivation by his folly; and had he not abandoned the practice, he would have lived but a very short time.' Snuff is highly injurious to apoplectic persons, and those labouring under deafness and other diseases of the head—to the consumptive—to those afflicted with internal ulcers,

or subject to spitting of blood. It is an uncleanly habit: it vitiates the organ of smell; taints the breath; weakens the sight, by withdrawing the humours from the eyes; impairs the sense of hearing; renders breathing difficult; depraves the appetite; and, if taken in abundance, gets into the stomach, and injures in a high degree the organs of digestion.

'BOILING DOWN' IN AUSTRALIA.

In addition to the demand for colonial consumption, and for salting, a new market for the surplus stock has been found within the last few years, by the discovery of the process of 'boiling down,' or converting the whole carcase into tallow. He who first put this plan into operation deserved the thanks of all the colonists; for had not this method, or some equivalent to it, been invented, cattle and sheep must soon have become almost unsaleable, as the supply had so greatly exceeded the demand, whereas now, though the colonial market should be overstocked, the animal, whether sheep or ox, is at least worth its hide and tallow for exportation. 'Boiling down' is a very simple and rapid process. The whole carcase, having been cut up into pieces, and thrown into large cast-iron pans, each capable of containing several bullocks, is boiled to rags, during which operation the fat is skimmed off, until no more rises to the surface. The boiled meat is then taken out of the pans, and after having been squeezed in a wooden press, which forces out the remaining particles of tallow, it is either thrown away, or used as food for pigs, vast numbers of which are sometimes kept in this manner in the neighbourhood of a boiling establishment. The proprietors of these places will either boil down the settler's sheep and cattle at so much per head, or purchase them wholly from him in the first instance, and convert them into tallow at their own risk. The value of an animal for this purpose depends of course entirely on his condition, and usually varies from 30s. to L.3, 10s.—*Bush Life in Australia.*

SAVING OF FUEL IN GAS-WORKS.

At the last meeting of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, Mr W. Kemp stated that he had made a valuable discovery in economising fuel at Galashiels gas-works. Where coal-tar is burned, it has an injurious effect on the furnace bars and retorts, the greatest annoyance arising from the rapid clinking up of the furnace bars, to remove which the firemen had frequently to throw water into the furnace, which caused the rapid destruction of the bars. To prevent this, the idea occurred to Mr Kemp of using the exhausted tan-bark of the tan-works, which had the desired effect. The force-pump for injecting the tar into the furnace was next thrown aside, as it was found that the dry bark absorbed tar equal to its production at the works. His method is as follows:—The bark is dried, and mixed with the coke of the gas-coal, bulk for bulk; a paulful of tar is thrown upon it, not quite so much as it will absorb, and it is then turned over. The mixture burns with a fine clear flame, attended with less smoke than formerly; the furnace bars, by remaining unclinkered, admit the oxygen freely for the combustion of the fuel. Where tan-bark cannot be had, peat moss, loose and dry, makes a good substitute. Mr Kemp stated that in one year L.126 was saved in furnace coal.—*Pharmaceutical Times.*

THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONS.

W. AND R. CHAMBERS respectfully announce that a HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONS, which has been preparing for them during the last two years, is at length put to press, and will forthwith appear. Originally, it was intended to confine the work to a history of the deeply-interesting period from 1789 till the fall of Napoleon in 1815; but recent events have rendered it desirable to extend the narrative to 1848; and therefore, besides an account of the First Revolution, the Consulate, the Empire, the Restoration, the Revolution of 1830, and the Reign of Louis-Philippe, it will include an ample notice of the late exciting scenes—the whole drawn from original sources, and presented in a comprehensive and popular form. The work, to consist of Three Volumes post 8vo., will be issued in portions convenient for purchasers.

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